

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
January 6, 2022

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on January 6, 2022, at 5:30 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at 201 West Gray Street, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ITEM 1, being:

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, May, Moxley, Sallee and Salmond

Absent: Commissioners Isacksen and Ross

City Officials

Present: Jason Olsen, Parks and Recreation Director
James Briggs, Park Planner II
Wade Thompson, Parks Manager
Veronica Tracy, Recreation Manager

ITEM 2, being:

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2021, REGULAR PARK BOARD MINUTES,
AND THE DECEMBER 9, 2021, SPECIAL PARK BOARD MINUTES

Commissioner Davison made the motion, and Commissioner Favors seconded to postpone the approval of the December 9, 2021, Special Park Board Minutes until the February 3, 2022 meeting. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, May, Moxley, Sallee and Salmond

NAY: None

Commissioner Sallee made the motion, and Commissioner Davison seconded to approve the December 2, 2021, Regular Park Board Minutes. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, May, Moxley, Sallee and Salmond

NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Favors made the motion, and Commissioner Moxley seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Davison, Favors, May, Moxley, Sallee and Salmond

NAY: None

ITEM 4, being:

ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director of Parks and Recreation, highlighted the Parks and Recreation (P&R) Department Organization Chart stating there are a total of 83 employees. He said there was a significant increase in P&R employees when there was a department restructure and the Facility Maintenance Division moved to the P&R Department from the City Clerk's Office. Mr. Olsen said this move made good sense because Facility Maintenance is responsible for maintaining all City facilities, including the P&R, which is approximately 80% of the City facilities, i.e., Police, Fire, Radio Towers, and Municipal Complex, etc. He said the Urban Forester position is vacant and was recently opened to receive applications.

Mr. Olsen said the Administrative Division is responsible for Department Budget, Capital Projects, Planning, and overall guidance to each division. He said the Park Board, Tree Board, and Public Arts Board report to the P&R Department. The cultural facilities in the P&R Department include the Firehouse Art Center, Cleveland County Historical Museum, Sooner Theatre, and Santa Fe Depot. The Administrative Division includes six full-time employees (including the Urban Forester position) and has an annual budget of \$660,000, which the General Fund funds.

Mr. Olsen highlighted the Capital Projects, which is also run through the Administrative Division, and stated they are funded by Capital Improvements Project (CIP) Fund, Room Tax Fund, Park Development Fund, and Norman Forward (NF). He said some completed NF Projects include the Westwood Family Aquatic Center, Westwood Indoor Tennis Center, Griffin Park – through Phase 4, Ruby Grant Park; Andrews Skate Park, and multiple neighborhood park renovations at Oakhurst, Rotary, Sonoma, and Praire Creek. Current NF Projects underway include: Griffin Park- Phases 5 & 6 (completion date Spring 2023); Reaves Park – Construction started (completion date Spring 2023); Young Family Athletic Center (YFAC) – Construction started (completion date June 2023); Senior

Wellness Center – Construction to begin in March 2022 (completion date April 2023); Saxon Park Conceptual Phase and Neighborhood Park Renovations to include Vineyard and Cherry Creek.

Mr. Olsen highlighted the Board of Park Commissioners duties to include: consider parkland dedication ordinance requirements for residentially zoned plats; propose rules and regulations for the maintenance and operation of parks and recreation facilities; consider policy matters relative to the use of those facilities; and make recommendations to improve the park and recreational facilities. He said the Board of Park Commissioners also receive annual reports from the Firehouse Art Center, Sooner Theatre, Performing Arts Studio, Cleveland County Historical Society (Moore-Lindsey House Museum); Norman Youth Soccer Association (Griffin Park); Ball Clubs of Norman (Reaves Park); Little Axe Youth Sports Association; Santa Fe Family Athletic Center (YFAC); and Healthy Living (Senior Wellness Center). Members Salmond and Sallee asked about the Santa Fe Family Athletic Center and Healthy Living, and Mr. Olsen said they are the operators for the YFAC and Senior Wellness Center, respectively. Member Sallee said she thought the Public Arts Board would fall under the Norman Arts Council. Staff said a few years ago, and City Council felt that there needed to be a City subcommittee to have input and decisions on public art and formed the Norman Arts Council. Mr. Olsen said the Norman Arts Council works in conjunction with the Public Art Board, which gets annual funding from the City. He said PAB assists with the Bicycle Racks Project and recently installed *GEMS* Project at Ruby Grant Park.

Mr. Wade Thompson, Park, and Facility Manager, highlighted the Park and Facility Maintenance Division to include: regular maintenance duties at 65 park sites (1,154 acres) with mowing, trimming, irrigation repairs, playground installation, restroom maintenance, etc.; provide maintenance to all City buildings and facilities, as well as manage the City Tradesworkers (electrical, plumbers, and heat and air); assist and provide support for special events such as; Norman FourthFest; Winterfest; Medieval Fair, and others. He said he manages 37 full-time employees, four Permanent Part-Time (PPT), and eight seasonal employees with a \$4.5 million maintenance and operation budget funded by the City's General Fund.

Mr. Olsen highlighted the Recreation Division of P&R and said there are five recreation facilities to include: 12th Avenue; Irving; Whittier; Little Axe; and Senior Citizens Center. He said there are various seasonal recreational programs offered at the recreation centers, including youth basketball, summer camps, after-school programs, and Westwood Tennis. Mr. Olsen said there are eight full-time employees, 17 part-time, permanent part-time (PPT), and seasonal Staff that also help coordinate special events. Those events include Norman FourthFest, Holiday Celebrations, Easter Egg Hunt, Daddy Daughter Dance, and Mother-Son Dance. Mr. Olsen said the Recreation Division has a \$1.7 million maintenance and operation budget that the General Fund funds.

Mr. Olsen said one of the P&R Recreation missions is to work with Norman Public Schools (NPS) and expand the reach for our child care program(s). He said NPS has put out a Request For Proposal (RFP) for an operator to run after-school programs on-site (school property), and the City of Norman plans to put in a bid to be the operator. He felt like the

City has an excellent chance to interview given our history of after-school programs and relationship with NPS.

Mr. Olsen highlighted the Westwood Golf Course, Tennis Complex, and swimming complex. The (new) Westwood Pool includes lap swimming, water slides, lazy river, wet deck, junior pool, seating, shade, and a concession area. The Tennis Center consists of a Pro Shop, two full-size indoor courts, 14 full-size outdoor courts, and four youth courts. Mr. Olsen said the Tennis Center teaches various lessons, has a league, and holds many tournaments. The 18-hole Professional Golf Course includes Open Play, Men's, Women's and Senior Activities, Tournaments, Lessons, Pro Shop, and Restaurant. The Golf Course has approximately 35,000+ rounds per year, has eight full-time employees and 100 seasonal employees with a \$2.3 million Special Revenue Operation versus the General Fund for previous P&R divisions. Mr. Olsen said the City intends to break even with the Westwood operations (Golf, Tennis & Pool). Commissioner Salmond asked whether there are any plans to update the Golf Course and Mr. Olsen said the City recently paid off a \$2 million bond at the Golf Course. He said updating the Golf Course could be an option if citizens, the Park Board, and Council, etc., offer input and would like to see improvements made. Mr. Olsen said improvements could be done utilizing Norman Forward II funds and/or a separate bond and felt an update/improvement project such as a new pro shop, clubhouse, and/or restaurant would benefit the golf course very much. He said a new Golf Maintenance Superintendent was hired in May 2021, and he has already made enhancements to the golf course to include improvements to the greens, drainage issues, etc.

Mr. James Briggs, Park Planner, highlighted Park Development and said it has a lot to do with acquiring the land and building parks; specifically, the coordination of construction projects in the park system and the supervision of the Urban Forestry Program. He said he oversees the Parkland Dedication Ordinance and the Park Development Ordinance. Mr. Briggs said he also prepares a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and cost estimates for projects, including seeking grant funding for projects, if available.

Mr. Briggs highlighted the Park Land Dedication Ordinance and said it was established in 1976 to provide land for neighborhood parks. He said the ordinance also includes the following: residential development greater than 1 unit per acre requires a donation of land or fees in lieu of land to provide public parks; 2.5 acres per 1,000 projected population; plats containing greater than 2,500 people require a land decision; the Park Board reviews at preliminary plat stage to determine the recommendation of land or fee requirement, and the Neighborhood Master Plans are considered as well. Staff said the suitability of land is also a factor, and the City may require: Unity-single parcel; shape-appropriate for public park and recreation purposes; access-minimum of 50 feet collector street frontage—water and sewer access adjacent to one boundary; and topography-suitable for parks and recreation activities, 50% of the dedicated area should not exceed 5% grade. A temporary park site may be used until street frontage is provided to a permanent location.

Mr. Briggs highlighted fees in lieu of land, stating the per-acre value is negotiated with the developer, and payment is required with the filing of the final plat. He said the fees are used to purchase land close to the subject neighborhood, and where/when land is not available or the park site is fully acquired, the fees may be used for park development

purposes. The fees must be used in the same area from where they are generated. Private park options must be at the developer's request and must provide at least twice the amount of land required for a public park, based on a formula described in the ordinance. A private park must be maintained by a mandatory Property Owners Association (POA). The developer may relieve the neighborhood portion of the park development fee requirement by providing the amount of park improvements. Only "typical park improvements" qualify to relieve the development fees.

Mr. Briggs highlighted the Park Development Ordinance, stating it was established in 1994 to develop parkland; \$150 per residential dwelling unit, \$75 for neighborhood park improvements in the area, and \$75 for community park improvements. The Community Parks include Griffin, Reaves, Andrews, Sutton, Saxon, and Ruby Grant. Mr. Briggs said the fees are assessed by the builder when the building permit is issued. He said the community park fees are budgeted in the 5-year CIP, and the neighborhood park fees are appropriated as requested.

The Board acknowledged the report.

ITEM 5, being:

NORMAN FORWARD UPDATE

Mr. Jason Olsen, Director, Parks and Recreation Director, provided a Norman Forward Update.

Park Maintenance Facility

The new \$2.5 million Municipal Maintenance Complex construction is nearly complete and almost ready for occupancy. Construction was initially scheduled to be completed by October 2021; however, wet weather has pushed the approximate move-in date to mid to late January 2022. Mr. Olsen said the facility would house Park Maintenance and be the City fleet, fire, and bus facility. He told a ribbon-cutting would be scheduled in February, and Staff will let the Board know to attend.

Reaves Park

Mr. Olsen shared pictures of continued work at Reaves Park, reflecting a drainage structure that will pull water off of Jenkins Avenue and will exit off at the Jimmy Austin Golf Course. Mr. Briggs said the contractor is currently working on the north parking lot to gain better access to Timberdell. This project will also provide all youth baseball and softball fields at Reaves and complete the removal of those sports' fields from Griffin Park (which will allow the Griffin Park Soccer Complex project to be completed). He said work would commence in the northern part of the park and proceed south, along with the demolition of the old Park Maintenance facility. A 16-month build period for Reaves Park is anticipated. Staff continues to work with the Ball Clubs of Norman (who operate the youth baseball and softball programs) and the Medieval Fair director to ensure all those activities can proceed at the park during the construction of the ballfield, parking, and road, utility, and facility improvements are made.

Griffin Park

Mr. Olsen said Phase IV of the Griffin Park Project is substantially completed. The contractor is ready to proceed with Phase V, which is already designed to remove all baseball/softball fields and begin constructing the soccer fields. He said Crossland Construction had been hired as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) to finish the Griffin Park Project, which has an 18-month estimated completion timeframe and is about one year early than initially planned. Mr. Olsen said Phase VI is under design should go out to bid as soon as Phase V is completed.

Young Family Athletic Facility (YFAC)

Earthwork continues at the YFAC as the contractor hauls in over 50,000 yards of dirt (from the New Subaru Car Dealership near the UNP) to level the area and raise the grade by three (3) feet. Mr. Olsen said the entire earthwork portion of this project would take approximately three (3) months to complete. He said GE Johnson Construction Company, CMaR for the YFAC, received the second guaranteed maximum prices approved (\$12 million) for all concrete foundations, site utilities, and the pool.

Senior Wellness Center

Mr. Olsen said City Council approved a land exchange between the City and Norman Regional Hospital, and the money earned from the sale (approximately \$427,000 because the City-owned more land) can be used to construct a gymnasium at the Senior Citizen Center, which was a priority item early on in the design process. He said Staff requested FSB to design a gymnasium, to include three indoor pickleball courts that will overlay a full basketball court, which will be taken to the Ad Hoc Group for their approval at a future meeting.

ITEM 6, being

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Mr. Olsen said the Day of Caring is an annual one-day event that sends hundreds of volunteers out into our community to perform much-needed projects at nonprofit organizations. He said this year's date for Day of Caring had not been determined yet; however, the City of Norman participates each year and will do so again.

The City of Norman Daddy Daughter Dance – will return to an in-person attendance and virtual participation options, complements of SportsTalk 1400, on February 5th, 2022. Dads and daughters are welcome to enjoy a special evening with a live DJ, refreshments, and some fun surprises. The Department of Parks & Recreation has coordinated three in-person event options at Embassy Suites, 2501 Conference Drive, as well as a Virtual Option. The dances include:

Red Dance, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Pink Dance, from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Blue Dance, from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

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Virtual Option Daddy Daughter Dance @Home, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The Blue dance will be broadcasted over SportsTalk radio at 1400AM/99.3 FM, the SportsTalk app, or streamed on their website at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM 7, being

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Wright adjourned the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Passed and approved this 10th of FEBRUARY 2021-2022



Kristi Wright, Chairperson

